

## CLAIMS

I claim:

1. (Original) A method for relieving joint pain or other discomforts associated with joint disorders in a warm-blooded vertebrate comprising the step of delivering to said vertebrate by oral ingestion a nutritional supplement consisting essentially of an effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, and a food acceptable carrier, wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, is from about 0.1  $\mu\text{g}$  to about 400  $\mu\text{g/kg}$  of body weight.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of adding the hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, to the carrier, and wherein the carrier comprises food or water.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the nutritional supplement is provided in capsule form.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the warm-blooded vertebrate is a human, or an equine, canine, or feline species.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the joint pain is the result of an arthritic condition.
6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the arthritic condition is selected from the group consisting of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the joint pain is the result of an inflammatory condition involving skeletal or musculoskeletal structures.

8. (Original) A nutritional supplement consisting essentially of an effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, and a food acceptable carrier, the nutritional supplement provided in an orally ingestible dosage form.

9. (Original) The nutritional supplement of claim 8, wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid is 1 to 6 mg.

10. (Original) The nutritional supplement of claim 8 wherein the orally ingestible dosage form is a capsule or gel seal.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently amended) ~~The method of claim 11~~ A method for relieving joint pain or other discomforts associated with joint disorders in a warm-blooded vertebrate comprising the step of delivering to said vertebrate by oral ingestion a nutritional supplement consisting essentially of an effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, is from about 0.1  $\mu\text{g}$  to about 400  $\mu\text{g/kg}$  of body weight.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[11]]~~ 12 wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, is provided in liquid form.